



Senate confirms Hanft as family court judge

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ALBANY – Despite further delays by the state Senate, local attorney Richard Hanft's appointment to serve as a Rensselaer County Family Court judge was confirmed Wednesday evening.

While the confirmation was supposed to take place in the early afternoon, Hanft was forced to once again bide his time until senators convened in session later that day.

He was appointed to the position by Gov. David Paterson in June and, while cautiously optimistic, had already waited nearly a month for a formal decision from the legislative body to act on the various matters before them during the recent Senate coup.

"This has been a dream of mine for many years and to finally have it fulfilled is both thrilling and humbling," said Hanft. "I look forward to serving Rensselaer County from the judicial bench."

Most recently an attorney with Tully Rinckey PLLC, Hanft had been practicing family and matrimonial law in Rensselaer County for more than 35 years and has also served as a certified law guardian for children in deputed child custody and neglect cases.

He also formerly served as the legislative assistant for the Troy City Council and dedicated legal counsel for its Democratic majority, a position which he resigned upon his Senate confirmation.

Hanft will have to seek re-election to the position this fall where he will face Working Families Party candidate Geri Pomerantz and Democrat Beth Walsh, who is running without formal party support, in a September primary before one of them will face Republican Arthur Dunn in November.

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